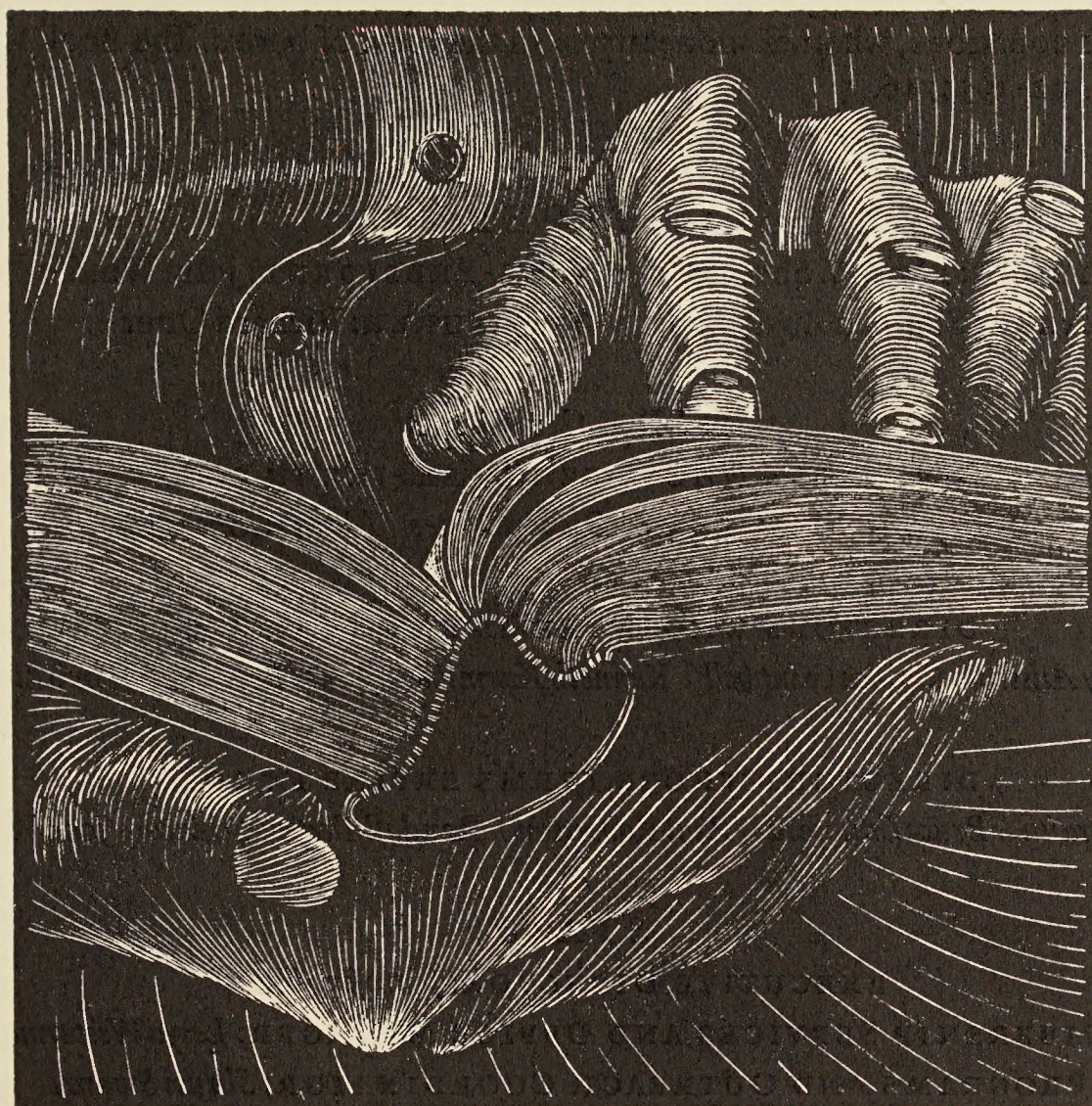


THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA
QUARTERLY NEWS-LETTER

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IN REMEMBRANCE: SANDOR G. BURSTEIN, MD

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THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA is a non-profit membership organization founded in 1912. It supports the art of fine printing related to the history and literature of California and the West through research, publishing, public programs, and exhibitions. Membership in the club is open to all. Annual renewals are due by January 1 of every year. Membership dues are: Regular, \$95; Sustaining, \$150; Patron, \$250; Sponsor, \$500; Benefactor, \$1,000, and Student, \$25. All members receive the *Quarterly News-Letter* and, except Student members, the annual keepsake. All members have the privilege — but not the obligation — of buying Book Club of California publications, which are limited, as a rule, to one copy per member until remaining quantities are released for purchase of additional copies. All members may purchase extra copies of keepsakes or QN-Ls, when available. Portions of membership dues — in the amount of \$36 for Regular members, \$91 for Sustaining members, \$191 for Patrons, \$441 for Sponsors, and \$941 for Benefactors — are deductible in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code, as are donations, whether monetary or in the form of books. The Book Club of California's tax-exempt number is 42-2954746.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

THE BAY AREA IN GENERAL, AND THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA in particular, have long provided support, appreciation, and inspiration for a remarkable number of book artists and connoisseurs. Now a group of younger practitioners is on the rise, drawn to the region for the same resources and sense of community that first appealed to earlier generations. This issue of the *Quarterly News-Letter*, in conjunction with an ongoing series of programs, exhibitions, and publications at the Book Club, is dedicated to that community — past, present, and future.

To begin, for our summer exhibition (opening May 2, 2016) the Book Club of California will celebrate the legacy of the San Francisco-based journal *Fine Print: The Review for the Arts of the Book*, which for fifteen years (1975-1990) brought together talented printers, typographers, designers, binders, calligraphers, scholars, historians, writers, and editors (emerging and established, from California and around the world), to produce a quarterly review of fine press books, top notch articles on all of the book arts, essays on the history of the book, and stunning graphics that remain both eye-catching and compelling today. To kick off that exhibition, we reprint here a letter from *Fine Print's* founder and publisher, Sandra Kirshenbaum, which was originally published on the occasion of that journal's tenth anniversary.

This issue of the *Quarterly* also includes an article on a number of accomplished contemporary book artists scattered around the North Bay who have found each other and begun working together to produce masterful fine press books, including L O O M, which was co-published by Richard Wagener's Mixolydian Editions and David Pascoe's Nawakum Press in 2015, and received this year's Carl Hertzog Award for Excellence in Book Design.

Looking forward, we present a selection of interviews that QN-L Managing Editor Georgie Devereux conducted with participants from the "Next Generation Printers Showcase" that was held at the Book Club on February 1, 2016. That event featured a pop-up exhibition and presentations by six emerging printers and publishers. Further introduction to these presses (and others) is offered through the ephemera you will find inserted among the following pages, all of which was generously designed, printed, and donated specifically for inclusion in this issue. Thank you to Colpa Press, Dependable Letterpress, Lady Bones Print Shop, Lemoncheese Press, The Prototype Press, Super Classy Publishing, and Volta Press for your contributions!

Finally, we would like to remember several beloved Book Club members who we lost in recent months. David Joseph Johnson (1985-2015), co-founder of The Prototype Press; Sandor Burstein (1924-2015), whose collection was featured in the club's popular 2015 exhibition *Alice in Bookland: Fine Press Editions from the collection of Mark and Sandor Burstein*; and Henry Snyder, who was the Book Club's own librarian from 2013 until his death on Sunday, February 28, 2016. Each of these made lasting contributions to our community, and will be deeply missed.

CELEBRATING FINE PRINT IN 1985

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED AS "A Decennary Letter from the Publisher" in *Fine Print: The Review for the Arts of the Book*, Vol. II, No. 1: 3-10 (1985), on the occasion of the journal's tenth anniversary. With the generous permission of Noel Kirshenbaum, we reprint it here in conjunction with the exhibition *Fine Print: 1975-1990*, which will be on view from May 2 – August 4, 2016 at the Book Club of California. This exhibition will showcase the remarkable legacy of the journal, which began as the vision of Sandy Kirshenbaum; grew and thrived with the efforts of a core editorial team that included Stephen Corey, Rare Book Librarian, and two young printers, Linnea Gentry and George Ritchie, who were working for Andrew Hoyem at the time; and went on to achieve high standards of both content and form through the contributions of many talented collaborators from California and around the world. As Robert D. Harlan has written, "The entire corpus [of *Fine Print*] will continue to be studied and admired by practitioners, students, and connoisseurs." Sandy's letter provides a compelling argument for the importance of the book arts that remains relevant to this day.

WELL, WHY *Fine Print*? WHY THEN—IN 1973, AND WHY STILL NOW—in 1985? Periodicals dealing with the arts of the book and related typographica are not noted for longevity; few of them have lasted more than five years. Even the most venerable among them, the British journal *The Fleuron*, flourished for only seven years (1923 to 1930). Nor can we take much solace from the example of our brethren, the computer journals, of which there are said to be about two hundred in existence. One new computer magazine is introduced every week, and twelve existing computer magazines fold every month. According to these statistics, computer magazines rate only slightly below bald eagles as an endangered species. Book arts magazines, by contrast, must be totalled in terms of decades. Off hand I can think of about seven book-related journals (including book collector's magazines, but not literary journals) that have come to existence in the decades following the birth of *Fine Print*. Only one of these, to my knowledge, has expired. In terms of mortality statistics, bookish periodicals seem to be the safer enterprises.

I am often asked to recount something of the birth of *Fine Print* (I wonder, do they ask Malcolm Forbes?). I respond graciously, at judicious length, trying to divine the extent of the questioner's real interest, so as not to bore with unnecessary details and yet to retain some of the drama of the *nacimiento*. This decennary issue seems a suitable place to document the genesis of this magazine.

Back in 1974, my bookish tastes were being formed as I prepared thousands of books, from yellowing pulp novels to glowing illuminated manuscripts, for sale at auction. I had decided that my field would be fine printing, illustration, aesthetically beautiful books. I then made an entree of sorts as an independent bookseller; I gathered some books of interest, made a few sales, and even issued a couple of modest (very modest) catalogues of illustrated children's books.

But I never did become The Bibliopole of the Book Beautiful because my full maturation in the book business was arrested by something that came one day in the mail. It was a four-page newsletter, rather insubstantial and poorly printed on cheap paper. It was filled with news about the art world: which artists were working where, the latest appointments to museum posts, art thefts, tax law, exhibitions, catalogues. Not particularly well written — but informative. And then it flashed in my mind that there was no newsletter for book arts; nowhere a printer or bookbinder could turn to learn, on a regular basis, about the activities of others in their fields.

And slowly, it grew in my mind with a certain terrible ineluctability that I could and should produce such a newsletter for the book arts. Looking back, I can see that I was actually responding to a period of flux and change in the long tradition of fine bookmaking in America. Robert Grabhorn had just died, capping the bountiful spring of fine books that had poured forth for over fifty years from the Grabhorn and Grabhorn-Hoyem presses in San Francisco. In December of 1974 Saul Marks died, and a beacon of fine printing in Southern California was extinguished. The Limited Editions Club had begun printing its books offset. Joseph Blumenthal's Spiral Press had closed. (All this was occurring as the Watergate drama whimpered to its conclusion with the resignation of Richard Nixon.) The protest literature of the late 1960s and early 1970s seemed to have left a legacy of the "quick and dirty" among small independent presses, and the printing of anything costing more than \$2.50 seemed not only an elitist act but a betrayal of democratic ideals. Indeed American bookmaking, like American politics, seemed to be approaching some kind of nadir.

Calligraphy was almost completely divorced from book design and type design. Italic handwriting seemed to be the concern of a few old eccentrics (sic) like Lloyd Reynolds in Oregon and Paul Standard in New York. Type was rarely being designed; it was simply photographed and converted from metal to film setting with little concern for its suitability to the new medium.

All over the country, letterpresses large and small, rotary and platen, were being scrapped, while case after case of foundry type and pound after pound of irreplaceable matrices were sent to a molten grave to make room for the continuing advance of lithographic, computer-generated print production. So, the traditional sources of new book design and typographic design were increasingly separated from the industrial base that had spawned them over the course of five centuries. Stagnation and preciousness seemed to be the inevitable fate of those who would remain with the obsolescent methods.

Bookbinding was considered a genteel hobby taken up by the socially incompetent; it certainly paled before such vigorous popular arts as macrame. In commercial book production, adhesive chemists were more important than bookbinders, as glued "perfect" bindings became the norm, and gaudy jackets hid shoddy ersatz bindings made of cheesecloth and board punctured in a cloth-like texture.

But the book arts were not dying — they were percolating underground. Calligraphy was poised for a renaissance of startling proportions, the story of which is too great to encompass here (see *Fine Print*, October 1982). Those who had been quietly trained in letterform design, like Sumner Stone and Charles Bigelow, by teachers like Lloyd Reynolds, would shortly begin making significant contributions to new designs for computer-generated digital type. (The connection between traditional lettering arts and commercial print production may yet be reestablished and transformed.)

By the mid-1970s, librarians, archivists, and others were becoming increasingly aware that the very same industrial processes that had made the manufacture of books ever faster and ever cheaper were sowing the seeds of their destruction with acidic wood-pulp papers and shoddy bindings. Libraries were already full of deteriorating volumes from the nineteenth century, and, obviously, modern books were heading for decay at an even faster clip. Bookbinding was no longer just a genteel hobby but a skill necessary to the restoration and preservation of the printed word.

In 1966 disastrous floods occurred in Florence, and thousands of rare and precious volumes were rescued from mud and mold by a team of bookbinders called in from all over the world. The spotlight was on them, and the role of the restoration bookbinder assumed almost heroic proportions, yet it became evident that professionals trained to do such work were few in number. Meanwhile the quieter crisis of silent decay on the shelves of libraries worldwide would create a continuing demand for those knowledgeable in the structure and chemistry of paper, leather, and book forms. Thus, even as bookbinding was losing its commercial relevance in industrial book production, it was becoming a vital, living profession to a new group of practitioners whose concerns were mainly cultural, historic, scholarly, and artistic. The resulting fluorescence was only barely apparent in the mid-1970s but became more observable over the next ten years.

In restoring early books, bookbinders explored and studied early binding structure. Binders like Chris Clarkson, Gary Frost, Don Etherington, Stella Patri, and Peter Waters talked and wrote about early bindings, their beauty, simplicity, superb function, and amazing durability; they gave workshops and exposed them to a whole new audience. These "new old" structures, but above all this new attitude of respect for bookbinding, permeated the world of designer bookbinders as well as edition bookbinders. Everyone in the field was encouraged to experiment with new concepts of structure and function and their relationship to ornamentation and artistic self-expression. The debate goes on, but meanwhile the practice of bookbinding is more exciting, lovely, diverse, and challenging than it has ever been.

A similar story could be told for papermaking. As the deficiencies of decaying modern papers became evident, papermaking processes came under increasing scrutiny and the strength and character of early book papers were held up as ideals to aspire to. A few young hand papermakers entered the difficult and demanding field of production papermaking, seeking to recapture the traditional methods and adapt them to modern exigencies. But scores of artists, primed by the growth in printmaking, discovered the importance of handmade papers as the substrate for their prints. From there, it was a short leap to discovering that the paper itself was the art. Once again the concept of a craft traditionally associated with books was exploded and the reverberations were carried back, opening new paths in bookmaking.

In printing too, ironically, the very processes that were causing the decline of the traditional book arts provided the means for their sustenance. The flood of obsolete machinery and materials was thrown on the market so cheaply that it became accessible to a growing class of printers whose primary interests were not industrial, nor even commercial, but literary or artistic or craft-oriented. New small presses seemed to spring up in the most unlikely places: Missoula, Montana; Gulfport, Florida; Mountain View, California.

Most importantly, a reservoir of traditional printing arts remained in several small printing operations in American universities and colleges, where a group of exceptionally inspiring teachers had quietly been turning out "pods" of fine printing enthusiasts who then, like the body snatchers of the cinema, turned up in various places throughout the country to infect others with the idea that a new book — even when not illustrated by a famous artist of the School of Paris — could be beautiful and significant. Harry Duncan, Kim Merker, Say Amert, Carolyn Hammer, William Everson, Jack Stauffacher, Walter Hamady, Ray Nash, and Alvin Eisenmann are the names of a few of the teachers whose influence was felt in the mid-1970s and continues today.

In San Francisco Clifford Burke was a one-man non-institutional teaching institution. He began as a printer of political protest literature during the 1960s, and then turned to fine literary printing in the 1970s. Among those who spun off from his fertile field of influence were Kathryn Clark, now one of America's foremost papermakers, and Kathy Walkup, formerly of the Five Trees Press and now head of the Book Art program at Mills College (and an editor of *Fine Print*).

In the Pioneer Valley of Western Massachusetts, Leonard Baskin had abandoned the Gehenna Press and moved to England, but not without leaving behind the legacy of Harold McGrath and his elegant precision work with the letterpress, and not without leaving the impress of an ideal of powerful, completely modern illustrated books created by traditional wood engraving techniques, as seen today in the books of the Pennyroyal, Cheloniidae, and Chamberlain presses.

Despite these foci of activity and inspiration, I don't think anyone was aware (and certainly not I) that a book arts renaissance was underway, the fruits of which we are seeing today. This period of the mid-1970s might be characterized as a time of

creative unawareness. There were the fine presses that had been turning out volumes of exceptional beauty and originality for five, ten, fifteen, and many more years; they all seemed to be working in regional isolation, not really communicating with others across the country who were similarly engaged. Perhaps more significantly, they were seldom establishing meaningful dialogue or initiating collaborations with book artists in related fields of bookbinding, papermaking, and calligraphy. And most importantly, they were having difficulty reaching a wider audience of collectors and enthusiasts, just as I, then a bookseller and lover of fine books, was having difficulty in learning the facts about contemporary fine bookmaking.

Into this "communications gap" I stepped, in the summer of 1974, with my idea for a "newsletter" about modern finely printed books. I began to test the waters, asking various bookish friends what they thought of the idea. Among the first of these was Steve Corey, whom I had met while he was working on the Grabhorn Collection at the San Francisco Public Library. Steve's ebullient response and unreserved offer of assistance were an important impetus to the launching of *Fine Print*. Soon he had bruited about the idea at Andrew Hoyem press, and two young printers working there, George Ritchie and Linnea Gentry, volunteered their collaborative efforts and their knowledge of printing and typography to the project.

We four became an editorial team. We would sit around a card table in the evenings; Corey brought his portable typewriter, and we would look at books, argue heatedly about what should be reviewed, about what fine printing is, write news notes, and compile bibliographic descriptions. On December 23rd, final copy for the first issue of *Fine Print* was delivered to Andrew Hoyem's press, and in January 1975, almost two thousand copies were mailed by the editors and the editor's two children, who became *Fine Print's* first indentured mail servants. (Even now, in early adulthood, they still suffer from extreme fear and loathing of envelopes, twine, and post office sacks.) The issues, each with a subscription solicitation, were scattered to the four winds, but mostly to the mailing list of the Typophiles (kindly provided by Dr. Robert Leslie, who gave us an unsolicited donation of \$50), and of the Book Club of California. Enough of the solicitations came back with \$8 checks to help us launch Volume one, Number two.

People always like to hear a story about a humble beginning for a fledgling enterprise in a basement, a garrett, or at least on a kitchen table. Not to disappoint, I hasten to state that *Fine Print's* first office was set up on an old dining table in the basement next to the dryer where copy was typed on an old Underwood No. 5 typewriter purchased at the Alameda flea market for \$5. This lasted until the chief editor was driven upstairs by a severe allergic reaction to lint and mold, whereupon the *Fine Print* office took over breakfast room, not without complaints from her ousted family. It soon became evident that the magazine would not long survive as a cottage, or even a breakfast-room industry.

We launched a search for an office rental, one that our miniscule budget could afford. We finally found one on Van Ness Avenue, one of San Francisco's principal thoroughfares — convenient enough, but it had a few drawbacks. It looked like

three closets linked by a small corridor and it had practically no light, and what light there was entered from a lightwell that acted like an echo chamber, amplifying the roar of trucks and buses on the street. However, the most remarkable feature was the overpowering sickly sweet smell of frying donuts that assaulted one's nose upon opening the closet door. It seemed that the vent from the Winchell's donut shop, on the ground floor, ascended three stories through our closet wall, exuding abundant saccharine and lipid vapors into our humble premises.

In any case, paying the rent, no matter how modest, does have a maturing effect on business enterprises, as on individuals. *Fine Print* continued to grow and expand, and our coverage in various subject areas became more sophisticated. It soon became clear that the heart of the magazine was the review function. The rather bland and unassuming idea of a mere newsletter was cast aside; by volume two, the subtitle was changed from "A Newsletter for the Arts of the Book," to "A Review"

We had initiated our serious press book reviews with one of the most controversial books of the 1970s, *Granite and Cypress*, poems by Robinson Jeffers printed by California's renowned printer-poet William Everson. The book had some rather unusual features, including the deliberate offsetting of the type image on the versos of the long horizontal pages. In a book of otherwise pure classicism (excluding the unconventional binding and container), this constituted a startling violation of the canon of good pressmanship carried down through five centuries. I decided to call on the most experienced and respected American printer I could think of, and that was Joseph Blumenthal. (I smile now to recall the trepidation I felt asking him; used to venerable journals like *The Colophon*, would he write for *Fine Print*?) His response was immediate and enthusiastic, and he wrote an extremely sensitive and forward-looking review. At the same time, he set up a whole new chemistry of communication. Here was a respected Eastern printer giving a favorable review to a California book that many California printers and book aficionados had themselves considered flawed and "ruined." Who was right and who was wrong was not as important as the fact that people were talking about it.

I was hooked. Once I had seen how satisfying it was to publish a well-reasoned, knowledgeable typographic review, there was no turning back to the newsletter idea I had started with. Joseph Blumenthal became just the first of a long roster of authoritative reviewers who have graced and enlivened the pages of *Fine Print*. We still regard the publishing of reviews as an awesome responsibility.

As the magazine matured editorially, physical changes in format also became inevitable. Graphic diversity had been the hallmark of the magazine ever since Andrew Hoyem had initiated the idea of changing the type style and design of each issue. But as the number of pages increased, this policy, beguiling as it was, became an impossible burden that the small honorarium given the designer of each issue could not recompense.

Starting with volume six, number one, we launched a standard internal design done by Linnea Gentry, who by that time was also printing the magazine at Ama-

ranth Press. She used Van Krimpen's Spectrum type, and though we have gone through various design changes since then, we still find Spectrum to be the most legible of those types economical of space. This was the genius of Jan van Krimpen.

Even with a standard internal format established, I was loathe to give up the graphic playfulness that had been one of my principal joys as a publisher over the previous five years. So we initiated the idea of having a different designer for the cover of each issue. There was to be no set logo or frame or banner or type style that the designer need feel fettered by, and each designer was to have unalloyed artistic freedom. My job as publisher was to find some of the most exciting, unconventional graphic artists possible — with special preference given to those working in letterpress or calligraphy or type design — and turn them loose. I reasoned that the design excesses or infelicities I might incur with such a policy would be more than balanced by the design heights to be achieved through freedom of creativity. A glance at an array of *Fine Print* covers of the last five years will, I believe, prove me right. They are a feast of graphic delights, from the minimalist-ruled arrangements of Betsy Davids to the elaborate Islamic marbled painting — re-created by Chris Weimann, to the fairy-tale fantasy of Sarah Chamberlain — and the many others of equal genius too numerous to mention. I can truthfully say I love them all, though I realize not every individual reader will. But I trust that readers will always take pleasure in criticizing *Fine Print* graphics as an exclusive right of subscribership. Suppose that, looking back over ten years of issues, someone were to ask me what are the accomplishments of *Fine Print* of which I am most proud. First, I would have to cite our excellent "On Type" articles, earlier under the editorship of Linnea Gentry and more recently under Charles Bigelow. I believe that in aggregate they constitute the most thorough and yet far-ranging exploration of the history and contemporary development of type design to be published in any American journal in recent years. While not shrinking from the thorough exposition of the work of historically important designers like Jan van Krimpen, Nicholas Kis, and Eric Gill, we have also displayed new type designs by Matthew Carter, Gerard Unger, Hans Eduard Meier, and Hermann Zapf. I am especially pleased that while keeping the articles on a high technical level, we have still managed to introduce a whole new audience to the joys and fascinations of those twenty-six intricate little forms that the human hand and eye have refined over so many millennia.

Next, I would point to the superior coverage we have given to contemporary bookbinding under the editorship of Susan Spring Wilson and W. Thomas Taylor. "The Featured Bookbinding" has showcased the work of designer binders and, less often, edition binders, and once, of a conservation binder. We have not attempted to be critical, but have taken a craft-oriented approach, allowing each binder to discuss technique and processes, and also color and form that lead to the creation of a particular design. In doing so, *Fine Print* has been instrumental in exposing bookbinding to the light of public consideration where often in the past the work of an individual binder has sped too quickly from the binder's workbench to the collector's or the institution's shelf, without public exposure. We think these articles form a sort of symposium in the appreciation of modern bookbinding,

revealing it to be simultaneously an art and a craft, which on the highest levels requires exceptional intellectual grasp as well as artistic control.

Nor do we believe that these highest levels are necessarily only approached by designer bindings. In the future, we plan to give increasing attention to well conceived and finely crafted edition bookbindings, especially where these are the result of a close creative collaboration between bookbinders and other bookmakers in different disciplines. Too often the role of the bookbinder has been obscured.

Next I would point with pride to our significant contributions in bringing forth articles and reviews of the *history* of books, printing, and the graphic arts (frequently at the suggestion of editor Abe Lerner) — this in a magazine whose principal focus has been and will remain contemporary figures and current activities. Why? Because, like architecture, the graphic arts, without precedents, without grammar of forms and structures laid down by previous generations, are mere sticks and stones and puerile scratchings.

Academic historians have recently discovered something that bibliographers and printing historians and even book collectors have known for years, that in the history of books and printing lies the material expression of the entire cultural endeavor of modern man. *Fine Print* has intended to move printing history from the closed area of scholarly journals and bibliographic conferences and present it as a rich “gift” to practitioners of book arts, to aficionados and dilettantes of books, and even to literati who have *read* many a printed page, but have never (consciously) *seen* one. (Admittedly, we have a way to go before achieving this goal.)

But I feel the most important achievement of *Fine Print* has been to break down, in some degree, the barriers to communication that have existed in the many worlds of the book. A book may well be one of the most complex objects made by man. Each of the crafts that goes into making a single fine book — paper-making, letterform creation, type design, typography, typefounding, typesetting, illustration or ornamentation, printing, binding — is in itself a highly developed discipline with its own long tradition and canons of practice and appreciation. I can think of no person who has fully mastered all these disciplines (perhaps William Morris came closest), and therefore it is not surprising that communication among them has been less than satisfactory. A printer is unlikely to devote his or her time to an exhaustive reading of every issue of *The New Bookbinder*, and rare is the bookbinder who has digested Updike’s *Printing Types*, but each can read both bookbinding articles and typographic articles in *Fine Print* and thus learn to appreciate and respect the complexities of the art of the other.

This has, I believe, led to more dialogue and to more collaborations in which book artists in various disciplines come together to produce a book, each having a creative input and not merely directed participation. The old idea of the “private press book” as the embodiment of the vision of one person (preferably a man) will probably never die, but the new multi-disciplined approach to fine bookmaking as seen in the new book arts programs in American colleges and in the new centers for book arts that seem to be popping up everywhere (Minneapolis; Iowa City; Chicago; Sydney, Australia) will be the path of highest development for the book form.

And so what? What do we care if the book form becomes highly developed in the later twentieth century? Who will need it? Strictly from the point of view of communications, the book may become a frivolity, a superfluity, as we are increasingly bombarded with mega- mega- mega- tele-communications. (Thirty-nine percent of all ISBNs, International Standard Book Numbers, are already given to software.) Do you still sing the praises of the book's portability, convenience, legibility? Forget it. Those are precisely the qualities that electronics will mimic and surpass, just as the codex did to the scroll, just as Gutenberg did to the manuscript.

Well then, the book apologist will say, there will always be the book as a thing of beauty and a medium of artistic expression. Once again, one may reply, who needs it? We've got fiber art and video art and mail art and pop art and performance art, and even leaving aside the traditional arts, when all else fails we have conceptual art.

Try again, booklovers: what are the special qualities of the book form that makes the path of its development an important indication of the progress of our culture? For one thing, there is permanence. This may seem like a minor quality now (and goodness knows, it can only be applied to well-made books), but it will assume importance in the face of the growing ephemerality of messages of all kinds. (One radio station in San Francisco, 93 on the dial, cuts up all its editorials and public service announcements into 93-second fragments, the better to compete, presumably, for the tidbits of attention-span a listener might cast their way.)

Several years ago, a Yale professor is said to have calculated, after many hours of computer analysis, the probability that a chimpanzee might copy the complete works of Shakespeare. If, he said, an ape were permitted to type randomly day and night at a speed of ten characters per second, he might duplicate the Bard's work by accident once every trillion trillion trillion years. The good professor, it seems to me, has missed the point entirely. The proper questions should be, "Would we know it when he did it?" and "How long would it last?" I hope he won't be typing it on a VDT. The beauty of the electronic word is its ephemerality, its speed to materialize and its ability to vaporize at the touch of a button. The book should not, in its future, attempt to compete with that. What the book will have is authority, power, validation. When every office has an inexpensive type-quality laser printer, and every individual is his own publisher, "real" printing will be reserved for texts of lasting value.

The uniqueness of the book form is the way it brings together the two principal streams of human creativity, the verbal and the visual, literature and art, the author and the artist. This alone will make the development of the book important to our culture. No other form will express and embody the text quite so well, and the whole duty of the printer/book artist is to see that it continue to do so. No other form can so acutely enhance and extend, through its artistry, the reading experience. And reading, real reading, not just passive absorption of images, must remain one of the most insightful and meaningful of human activities.

And that, my friend, is the why of *Fine Print* in 1985 and beyond. Thank you for being so prescient as to read it and support it.

SANDRA KIRSHENBAUM (1938–2004) was the editor and publisher of *Fine Print*.

NORTH BAY WARP & WEFT

This article originally appeared in Parenthesis 29 (Autumn 2015): 24–17

JENNIFER SIME

every line a dead end every line
a new path every line a broken
walk every line a new turn every
line a false promise every line an
open expanse every line a fractured hope
every line a fresh breath every line
a multiple meaning and a troubled grace

— Alan Loney, LOOM, 2014

JUST OVER THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, OPPOSITE THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO, lies the region known locally as the North Bay. This is the least populated, most rural part of the Bay Area. The region's wine is well known, certainly. Less known is that the area is also home to a vital and productive fine press book community.

A good number of talented and dedicated individuals pursue their own vision of the book here, often in semi-solitude. Yet a few members of the community have recently been gravitating toward each other, working together to form a collaborative network that enriches their own experiences, both as individuals and as a group, as well as their fine press output. Within this expanding web of artists, publishers, printers, book designers, and design and edition binders are: fine press publisher David Pascoe of Nawakum Press, printer and typesetter Patrick Reagh of Patrick Reagh Printers, and artist-become-fine-press-publisher Richard Wagener of Mixolydian Editions. More recently they've also drawn binders Coleen Curry and Lisa Van Pelt into their circle of cooperation.

Wagener started teaching himself how to engrave wood in 1980 after a chance encounter with a commercial engraving — an image of downtown office buildings, perhaps in Chicago — that led him to recognize the medium's potential for achieving both a high degree of detail and a wide variety of tonalities in print. He began to explore wood engraving as a means to an end: a technique that seemed capable of furthering his ideas on art and bridging his competing interests in natural science and abstract painting.

Wagener first entered the fine press book world after meeting the Berkeley-based printer Peter Koch in 1990. Koch suggested that they do a project together that would capture Wagener's use of letterforms in a blend of realistic and abstract imagery. This collaboration resulted in *Zebra Noise with a Flatted Seventh* (Peter Koch Printers, 1998), which featured twenty-six engravings following a zoological alphabet with an accompanying text of laconic fictions by Wagener evoking the American West. The two have since collaborated on three additional books: *The Fragments of Parmenides* (Editions Koch, 2004), *California in Relief* (The Book Club of California, 2009), and *The Sierra Nevada Suite* (The Book Club of California, 2013).

In 2006 Wagener established Mixolydian Editions for publishing his own books. His first endeavor, *Cracked Sidewalks*, was a series of vignettes and prose poems

about growing up in a particular part of Los Angeles during the 1950s and 1960s. After relocating to Petaluma in 2010, he published a second book, *Mountains & Religion*, featuring a series of engravings based on a 1995 trip to Nepal and Tibet.

During 2012, while Richard was printing the engravings for *The Sierra Nevada Suite* — serene yet monumental depictions of the trees, escarpments, and panoramas of these Northern California mountains — the recurring idea of a loom inspired him to create three drawings exploring the fragile minimalism of loosely woven lines and their capacity to convey both concept and materiality, cool abstraction and powerful emotion. It began with a question he posed to himself: how many threads does it take to make a weaving? These drawings were the basis for the suite of beautiful and evocative engravings that would become *LOOM*.

An encounter with the New Zealand poet Alan Loney (now living in Australia) at the Codex Book Fair and Symposium in 2013 gave Wagener the idea of collaborating on this work in progress. Later that spring, he sent fourteen engravings down to Melbourne, and Loney, finding that the images resonated with him, agreed to write a poem to accompany them. Originally, Richard intended to publish the book under Mixolydian Editions imprint; it was here, however, that the project intersected with David Pascoe of Nawakum Press.

David Pascoe came across letterpress printing at the age of ten. His neighbor, a practicing physician, owned a Chandler & Price platen press and introduced young David to the craft in his basement print shop. Later, as a student at Yale, Pascoe was reintroduced to letterpress at his residential college's Davenport Press. This followed an introduction by his father to the director of the Beinecke Library, a remarkable resource that was a convenient five-minute walk from his dorm room.

Pascoe began his publishing career in 1979, in a San Anselmo garage that also housed the Feathered Serpent Press owned by Don Greame Kelley, artist, author, and master letterpress printer. Kelley was teaching a printing and bookmaking class at the time and it was under his tutelage, and that of Susan Acker, that Pascoe published — indeed, wrote, illustrated, typeset, printed, and bound — his first book, *Seven Birds*, under the imprint Nawakum Press. Soon after, he purchased a number of presses and other equipment of his own. But following a meeting with Jim Robertson of the Yolla Bolly Press, David took a hard look at the challenges of pursuing fine press publishing while raising a family and not surprisingly took a different path, managing large-scale, commercial printing projects for advertising agencies.

Thus, when the Nawakum Press appeared in Santa Rosa in 2009, it was a rebirth. Here, Pascoe now originates, manages, and publishes limited editions of fine press and artists' books. He owns no presses, bookbindery, or equipment, but instead relies on a network of accomplished book artists to get the job done. Each project is unique and time-consuming, so the matchup with collaborators is critical. The artists and craftspeople he works with bring their own stories and experiences to the work; Pascoe makes fruitful use of these in the books he publishes.

The first edition from the reborn Nawakum Press was Rachel Carson's *Undersea* — her first published writing — with illustrations by Dugald Stermer. Since

then Nawakum Press publications have ranged from Robert Bly's love poems in *The Indigo Bunting* to Herman Melville's *Norfolk Isle and The Chola Widow*, from *The Book of Sand* by the Argentinian magic surrealist writer Jorge Luis Borges, to *Outside* by Barry Lopez, designed and illustrated by Barry Moser.

Pascoe first met Wagener at the 2011 Codex Book Fair in Berkeley and soon after began discussing the possibilities of collaborating on a book project. In May 2013, Richard called up David and said he had a project in the works that might be appropriate for Mixolydian Editions and Nawakum Press to publish together. Pascoe went to Wagener's studio, saw the engravings, found out about Alan Loney's participation, and was immediately interested. Nawakum Press had just published Loney's poem *In a Single Gesture*, which was printed by fellow North Bay printer and typesetter Patrick Reagh, who would also soon get drawn into the web of L O O M.

Patrick Reagh became a printer at age eleven, when his father purchased a small used Kelsey press for him as a gift. Beginning in 1968 he apprenticed as a union type compositor at Andresen Typographics for five years, where his training encompassed the transition from hot metal to the new "cold type" (phototypesetting) technology. Once he attained journeyman status, Reagh's desire to be a musician took precedence over his interest in printing, and he took a break from the trade to work as a jazz pianist.

But following the death of Saul Marks in 1974, Lillian Marks (both Saul and Lillian were friends of Reagh's father, William) hired Reagh to work at the Plantin Press in Los Angeles. Here he learned the basics of classical typography and presswork, and when the Plantin Press ceased its commercial operation in 1981, he was able to purchase the press's equipment and go out on his own. After a one-year partnership with Vance Gerry, Reagh established his own imprint and moved his press from the Los Angeles area to Sebastopol in 1995.

Today, nestled among tall redwoods, surrounded by a few intrepid cannabis cultivators, Reagh's studio (affectionately known as the Printing Barn) is a combined type foundry and printing atelier. There are four Monotype casters: one Supercaster, and three composition casters. There is also an Elrod machine that casts leads and slugs. Reagh has a complete run of many typefaces for casting including: Bembo, Ehrhardt, Fournier, Bulmer, Baskerville, Janson, Gills Sans, and Univers. Patrick's Barn is also home to a Vandercook SP-15 proof press, a Colt's Armory 10 x 15 handfed platen, a Heidelberg 10 x 15 Windmill, and a 28-inch Heidelberg cylinder press. His original 3 x 5 Kelsey tabletop press that his father gave him now rests atop a type galley stand in the foundry.

Reagh has received numerous awards for his work, and UCLA's Williams Andrews Clark Memorial Library holds his archives. He has worked with Pascoe on Herman Melville's *The Chola Widow* and Alan Loney's *In a Single Gesture*. Reagh cast the type for and printed L O O M and cast type for L O O M's companion book, *Vestige* (Mixolydian Editions, 2015).

Living just seven miles away, Pascoe often frequents Reagh's shop, and the two experiment with letterpress techniques. Similarly, Pascoe and Wagener often confer with each other on book-related projects they have underway. Through bibliophilic

organizations like the Book Club of California (Pascoe, Wagener, and Reagh are all members), the Colophon Club, and book fairs like Codex and the Fine Press Book Fair, these North Bay printers and publishers have established a powerful network that, despite being located on the metropolitan fringe, continues to draw in new talent. Such recent collaborators as Coleen Curry and Lisa Van Pelt are an integral part of this growing fine press community.

Perched on a steep hillside overlooking the outflow of Redwood Creek into the Pacific, just a few miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge, sits the hand book bindery of Coleen Curry. Originally from Canada, Coleen spent ten years living in Hong Kong and, later, Beijing. She developed her skills with five years of study at the American Academy of Bookbinding in Telluride, Colorado, where she was a student of Monique Lallier. Later she studied with Elenore Ramsey, Dominic Riley, and Hélène Jolis, and was assistant to master binder Don Glaister. Curry has exhibited internationally, is a past president of the Hand Bookbinders of California, teaches at the American Academy of Bookbinding, and is on the board of the San Francisco Center for the Book.

Ironically, Curry and Pascoe met Wagener at the 2014 inaugural FPBA book fair in Manhattan, where she bought two unbound copies of *LOOM*. Pascoe had seen her work before and admired it at a hand bookbinding exhibition at the San Francisco Public Library. Upon returning from New York, both men visited Curry at her Muir Beach studio and found in her a kindred spirit. Her work as a design binder is unique, exquisitely executed, and very personal. Fascinated with contrast in texture, form, and movement, she uses a combination of traditional materials and objects found in nature, manipulating and modifying them to expose what lies underneath.

At the time Pascoe met Curry he was working on a second book project with Barry Moser. It was Nawakum Press's *Encheiresin Naturae* (2015), a large format edition combining fifteen abstract relief engravings by Barry Moser with a heroic crown of sonnets by Pulitzer-winning Irish poet Paul Muldoon. The words of the title are an old alchemist's term referring to the "manipulation of nature." Looking to collaborate on a project together, Pascoe thought he saw a fit and teamed up with Curry, who created a special design binding shown at the February 2015 Codex fair, where the book was launched. The binding incorporated onlays and inlays of a wasp's nest, pewter, various leathers and sanded leather splits, rough edge gilding, and stone leaf.

Similarly, Lisa Van Pelt, who lives north of Santa Rosa in the wine country of Andersen Valley, was drawn into this bookmaking network when Pascoe encountered her work for a fine press in Southern California, along with other notable binders from the East Coast. Van Pelt is an edition bookbinder, hand binding fine press books mostly in the French tradition of the *livre d'artiste* and producing cases, boxes, and paste papers to go with them. Her work with Michele Burgess has led her to experiment with backing non-bookcloth for use in edition binding. After training with Claudia Cohen as a hand bookbinder in western Massachusetts, she established her own practice in 2003.

During her undergraduate studies at Hampshire College, Van Pelt studied architecture, a discipline she now finds useful in the designing and building of books, albeit on a smaller scale. Book content and text paper establish the initial parameters, much as terrain and climate do for a building site. Structure and materials proceed from there in collaboration with the artists, writers, printers, and publishers behind the work.

In 2007, wanting to escape the ice and snow of New England winters, Van Pelt decided to relocate her bindery and eventually landed in the middle of an apple orchard in Northern California. Pascoe and Wagener drove north one day to meet her, and over subsequent meetings a working relationship developed. Van Pelt has consulted with Pascoe on a number of editions, designed experimental paste papers, and given advice on structural binding elements. Most recently she bound *Vestige*, Richard's 2015 companion to L O O M.

The prospectus for L O O M states this essential idea: "Looms provide blank canvases on which we have been weaving stories for over five thousand years. The loom's basic structure has not changed over time; there has been no need. It is all utility, all grace." L O O M explores this idea and expresses it in book form. The project is itself a metaphor for and an embodiment of the encounters and collaborations that go into all fine press books, which weave together the particular skills, experiences, and attentions of printer, designer, artist, writer, binder, paper maker, publisher — and, ultimately, the reader. In this particular case, L O O M has formed a fabric of connections linking a fine press community in the fog-shrouded hills, valleys, and orchards north of San Francisco, but its reach extends to San Francisco, Texas, Manhattan, Australia, and beyond. The implicit proposition is that the book, like the loom, "connects the threads of our inner world with those of the natural world in countless and ever enduring forms."

JENNIFER SIME is executive director of the Book Club of California.

THE NEXT GENERATION

MOST OF THE PRESSES FEATURED BELOW PARTICIPATED IN THE "Next Generation Printers Showcase" that was held at the Book Club on February 1, 2016. That event generated an enthusiastic response, and we heard from many people who were interested in learning more, so QN-L managing editor Georgie Devereux compiled the following interviews. These emerging printers and small publishers are up to interesting things and should be on your radar.

COLPA PRESS

PROPRIETORS: Luca Antonucci and David Kasprzak. LOCATION: San Francisco, CA. YEAR FOUNDED: 2010. WEBSITE: www.colpapress.com. TYPE OF PRESS USED: Risograph. BIO: COLPA is the collaborative art practice of Luca Antonucci and David Kasprzak. They work together as publishers, designers, printers, and curators. COLPA PRESS publishes art books, limited edition prints and art objects, often working with artists on unique projects. Founded by Carissa Potter and Luca Antonucci

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in 2010, with great assistance from Hailey Loman, COLPA has grown to include international events and exhibitions. COLPA has exhibited with the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art at the FOG Design + Art Fair, the NY Art Book Fair at PSI MoMa, the LA Art Book Fair at the Geffen Contemporary MOCA, the Kadist Foundation, and the Headlands Center for the Arts. Their publications are in the permanent collection of the Getty Foundation, the Los Angeles County Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum, Stanford University, Reed University, and the Kadist Foundation.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A PRINTER (OR PRINTERS)? — *It's a way to extend our art practice into a collaborative format and work with artists on unique projects.*

WHAT'S BEEN ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE PROJECTS? — *One of my [Luca's] favorite projects was the Riso Book series. It was fun to design a traveling project where artists had to confront a printing technique head-on and develop artwork in response to it.*

WHAT'S ON YOUR PRESS RIGHT NOW? — *Right now we are printing a four-color edition with Todd Hido that will premiere at the 2016 LA Art Book Fair.*

IF YOU COULD PRINT ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD IT BE? — *Money.*

IF YOU COULD ONLY OWN ONE PIECE OF PRINTED EPHEMERA, WHAT WOULD IT BE? — *The Xerox Book.*

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TYPEFACE? — *Bodoni.*

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES OR MENTORS IN PRINTING? — *Steidl.*

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT PRINTING IN THE BAY AREA? — *The community of artists we get to work with.*

WHAT'S ONE PRESS (WITH A LETTERPRESS FOCUS) OUTSIDE OF THE BAY AREA YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT? — *Aardvark, in LA.*

DEPENDABLE LETTERPRESS

PROPRIETOR: Joel Benson. LOCATION: San Francisco, CA. YEAR FOUNDED: 2002. WEBSITE: www.dependableletterpress.com. TYPES OF PRESSES USED: Heidelberg T Platen (Windmill), Heidelberg KS Cylinder, Nebiolo Super Egeria Cylinder, Vandercook SPI5. BIO: Dependable Letterpress is a commercial job printer in the Dogpatch neighborhood of San Francisco, housed in the former American Can Company building, and specializing in letterpress printing. The press does short- and long-run work, primarily business cards and wedding invitations, but also prints wine labels, posters, broadsides, and two or three books per year. Dependable Letterpress works primarily from photopolymer plates, which are produced in-house. The press's new location on Illinois Street includes a gallery space in the front, which will be used for exhibitions of works on paper along with fabulous parties.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A PRINTER? — *First, learning about the tradition and history of fine press publishing from George Kane at the Cowell Press. Second, apprenticing when I was nineteen with Jim and Carolyn Robertson at the Yolla Bolly Press and realizing I could make a place in that tradition.*

WHAT'S BEEN ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE PROJECTS? — *I print fortunes for the antique fortune telling machines at the Musée Mécanique in San Francisco. And I printed*

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a book that documented the family memorial service for Steve Jobs. Copies were distributed to attendees only. Those are my two favorite projects.

IF YOU COULD PRINT ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD IT BE? — *Artists' books.*

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TYPEFACE? — *I'm partial to Goudy's Californian typeface.*

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES OR MENTORS IN PRINTING? — *James Robertson and Julie Holcomb are my biggest influences in doing what I do today.*

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT PRINTING IN THE BAY AREA? — *The collegial, non-competitive spirit among printers.*

WHAT'S ONE PRESS (WITH A LETTERPRESS FOCUS) OUTSIDE OF THE BAY AREA YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT? — *Starshaped Press in Chicago does fun and inventive compositions and illustrations with ornaments and dingbats, and is committed to printing from lead and wood. I also admire Wolfe Editions in Portland, Maine, another shop committed to traditional processes.*

LADYBONES PRINT SHOP

PROPRIETOR: Annemarie Munn. LOCATION: Berkeley, CA. YEAR FOUNDED: 2013. WEBSITE: www.ladybonesprint.com. TYPE OF PRESS USED: Annemarie is proud to be the steward of the Vandercook SP-15 from Five Trees, a women's printing collective from the 70s and 80s, which came to her from Eileen Callahan. The shop also has two presses that are under restoration, a 1949 Heidelberg Super Speed Ultra I (windmill) and a 1932 Vandercook #17 (the first Vandercook proof press to have an automated inking system). BIO: Ladybones specializes in letterpress and foilstamping, with an emphasis on unusual, hybrid projects that require gathering knowledge and resources from the community. While most of its time is spent on commission work, the shop is also focused on cultivating small publishing and artistic enterprises. Ladybones is optimistic and ambitious, and as publishers they are hopeful populists with open minds and quick hands.

Annemarie Munn is the owner and operator of Ladybones Print Shop. On the road to owning a print shop, she studied philosophy and creative writing, played in some bands, worked in bookshops and binderies, and printed as much as she could.

LAND AND SEA

PROPRIETORS: *Chris Duncan and Maria Otero.* LOCATION: *Oakland, CA.* YEAR FOUNDED: 2009. WEBSITE: www.landandseaeditions.virb.com. BIO: Land and Sea is a small press based in Oakland, California, run by Maria Otero and Chris Duncan. Land and Sea began during the final days of 2009 and has consistently published small editions of books and records by artists from the Bay Area and beyond. Under the same moniker, Chris and Maria organize small gatherings that celebrate the artists they work with as well as the communities they are a part of. Land and Sea is proud to have its editions in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Berkeley Art Museum, Stanford Library, and the Museum of Modern Art.

LEMONCHEESE PRESS

PROPRIETORS: *Li Jiang, James Blair (wife and husband)*. LOCATION: *Berkeley, CA*. YEAR FOUNDED: 2003. WEBSITE: *www.lemoncheese.org*. TYPES OF PRESSES USED: *Chandler and Price, Vandercook Proofpress, Heidelberg Windmill, Heidelberg Cylinder, Columbian Handpress, Albion Handpress, Washington Handpress, MM Kelton Engraving Press (the only one that we own)*. Bio: Lemoncheese Press began as a design studio. After its first foray into bookmaking in 2006, the studio became more focused on designing for letterpress printing. The first book was a micro-edition (twelve) of a children's story illustrated with hand-cut linoleum blocks and hand-set lead type. Lemoncheese Press has been providing custom design and letterpress printing for the past ten years, with projects ranging from identity systems to broadsides. A few years ago, founder Li Jiang started experimenting with the use of film, which is used to expose polymer plates, as a medium. Li hopes to continue the exploration of the technique in the press's upcoming book, *36 Views of Golden Gate Bridge*.

Four years after obtaining a bachelors degree in graphic design, Li Jiang decided there was more to the graphics world than just design, and wanted to learn more about printing. In 2006, chance led her to the door of David Lance Goines and Richard Siebert, with whom she began a learning process that continues today. In 2010 Li started working for Havilah Press to learn more about iron hand presses and has helped produce two books and numerous broadsides while at the press.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO BECOME A PRINTER? — *After doing freelance graphic design for a few years I [Li] missed being hands-on with projects and also felt that I didn't know enough about the printing aspects of the graphics world. I had taken a printmaking class in college and that certainly left a mark. I wanted to be able to complete a project from design to finished product. Designing on the computer often seems very removed from the actual physical world.*

WHAT'S BEEN ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE PROJECTS? — *9 x 12 inch baby announcements for sister and brother, printed from hand carved linoleum.*

WHAT'S ON YOUR PRESS RIGHT NOW? — *Technically nothing, I'm about to move my studio. I am working on a mezzotint.*

IF YOU COULD PRINT ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD IT BE? — *Travel back in time and watch them print the Gutenberg Bible. I know that's not the question you asked, but . . .*

IF YOU COULD ONLY OWN ONE PIECE OF PRINTED EPHEMERA, WHAT WOULD IT BE? — *Gutenberg Bible.*

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TYPEFACE? — *Garamond.*

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES OR MENTORS IN PRINTING? — *Letterpress mentors: Richard Siebert, David Lance Goines, Roger Plumb, Fred Voltmer, Barbara Voltmer. Intaglio Mentors: Jan Hisek, Keith Cranmer.*

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT PRINTING IN THE BAY AREA? — *So many resources and such a wide variety of people doing different things with printing.*

WHAT'S ONE PRESS (WITH A LETTERPRESS FOCUS) OUTSIDE OF THE BAY AREA YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT? — *Imprenta Ideal | Letterpress in Buenos Aires, run by Patricio Gatti.*

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IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU THINK WE SHOULD KNOW? — *The name of the press came from the misspoken version of “Jim and Li’s.” It was spoken as “Lim ’n Jeez” and misheard as “Lemoncheese.” So it stuck.*

PROTOTYPE PRESS

PROPRIETOR: Mark Sarigianis. LOCATION: Oakland, CA. YEAR FOUNDED: 2015. WEBSITE: www.theprototypepress.com. TYPE OF PRESS USED: Letterpress BIO: The Prototype Press is the new moniker for Sharp Teeth Press and is operated by Mark Sarigianis in Oakland, California. The goal of the publishing program is to produce first-edition works by local authors and artists, completely in-house. The press also letterpress prints, foils, and debosses a variety of materials here in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Mark Sarigianis is a printer, bookmaker, and typesetter in Oakland, CA. He studied graphic design at Old Dominion University before starting an educational letterpress program at an art center on the East Coast. After apprenticing at M&H Type in San Francisco, he co-founded (with David Johnston) the Prototype Press in 2015.

WHAT’S ON YOUR PRESS RIGHT NOW? — *Right now I am working on a deluxe edition of Charles Bukowski’s Ham on Rye, printed from metal type and illustrated with wood engravings by Sean Starwars (www.seanstarwars.com). All casting, printing, and binding will be done in-house.*

DO YOU HAVE A GO-TO BOOK ABOUT PRINTING? — *The Allen Press, Printing with the Handpress has always been a favorite.*

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE TYPEFACE? — *I’m a sucker for anything Goudy.*

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES OR MENTORS IN PRINTING? — *There have been many people who have helped me along the way. My professor Ken Daley at Old Dominion University, Paul Morris in Richmond, VA, and Lewis Mitchell in San Francisco, just to name a few.*

WHAT’S ONE PRESS (WITH A LETTERPRESS FOCUS) OUTSIDE OF THE BAY AREA YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT? — *I like following Russell Maret’s work.*

SUPER CLASSY PUBLISHING

PROPRIETORS: Andy and Katie Rottner. LOCATION: Vallejo, CA. YEAR FOUNDED: 2010. WEBSITE: www.superclassypublishing.com. TYPES OF PRESSES USED: Various. BIO: Founded in 2010 by Andy and Katie Rottner and based in Vallejo, California, Super Classy Publishing is a publisher of limited-edition handmade artist books. Their books have been exhibited locally and internationally, and can be found in private and institutional collections across the country — including the Library of Congress, Harvard University, Columbia University, Savannah College of Art & Design, Virginia Commonwealth University, San Francisco Art Institute, and Santa Clara University.

Andy Rottner is a Bay Area book artist and bookbinder. After receiving his MFA from San Francisco Art Institute, Andy trained under John DeMerritt of John DeMerritt Bookbinding. When he’s not creating books at Super Classy Publishing, Andy teaches bookbinding at San Francisco Art Institute and the San Francisco

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Center for the Book. Katie Rottner is an accomplished advertising copywriter, singer-songwriter, and award-winning author. In addition to managing the marketing and business needs of Super Classy Publishing and its clients, Katie provides advertising services to some of the world's biggest brands.

VOLTA PRESS

PROPRIETORS: Laureen Mahler, John Peck. LOCATION: Berlin, Germany. YEAR FOUNDED: 2007 in Oakland, CA. WEBSITE: www.voltapress.com. TYPES OF PRESSES USED: Vandercook and Korrex Cylinder, Heidelberg Windmill.

WHAT'S BEEN ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE PROJECTS? — *A few years back we printed a series of broadsides for Rakestraw Books in Danville. They commission prints for higher-profile readings and give the printers they work with a lot of freedom to create a design that represents the given book. Ours were often large and/or off-size, with big, bold forms and fairly esoteric typefaces — more like posters than standard broadsides.*

WHAT'S ON YOUR PRESS RIGHT NOW? — *We're currently working on a portrait of James Joyce made of wood and metal type. The eyepatch and bowtie are locked up, but we can't decide whether the hat (made from a 30-line "D") is too much.*

IF YOU COULD ONLY OWN ONE PIECE OF PRINTED EPHEMERA, WHAT WOULD IT BE? — *Der heilige Hieronymus in der Wüste by Albrecht Dürer. It's not really ephemera, but since it's a hypothetical question, we'll get greedy.*

DO YOU HAVE A GO-TO BOOK ABOUT PRINTING? — *Paul Maravelas's straightforward Letterpress Printing for specs, press origins, and technical info, and Thames & Hudson's The Book of Books for inspiration.*

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TYPEFACE? — *Our current favorite is Block, a fantastic old Berlin typeface from the Berthold foundry. It's beautiful and readable, but has a creepy, mid-century feel even though it's from 1908.*

WHO ARE YOUR HEROES OR MENTORS IN PRINTING? — *Betsy Davids, who taught at CCAC [now CCA] for decades and is now retired. She taught us the fundamentals of printing and encouraged us to start Beeswax Magazine, which eventually became Volta Press.*

WHAT'S ONE PRESS (WITH A LETTERPRESS FOCUS) OUTSIDE OF THE BAY AREA YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT? — *Galerie P98A: a true mecca of printing, design, and typographic know-how in central Berlin. In addition to producing monthly typeset posters, P98A is collecting and cataloging wood type from across Europe and the United States.*

BOOK REVIEW

Rebecca Rego Barry, *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places*, Voyageur Press, 2015. Introduction by Nicholas Basbanes.

MARGUERITTE PETERSON

THOUGH IT EMBARRASSES ME TO DO SO, I WILL ADMIT TO YOU THAT IT TOOK ME longer to read this book than it did for me to devour the last Harry Potter title. However, before you read the above sentence and think that it is a rude criticism of my interest in the material or the style of the writing, think again. It took me a month to read this “fantastic find” — on purpose.

Barry’s work is a type of book that gives one “the quick antiquarian book fix.” Her stories (or rather, those of the antiquarian book-dealing and scouting world, as told to her, with her accompanying research and quick-witted prose) are all ten pages or less, and are the perfect real-life, antiquarian book world short tales. They give all elements of a story — the characters, the plot, the questions or decisions to be made, and the results — all in five minutes or less! And that, my friends (many of whom are, apparently, in this book), is why it has taken me so long to read this work. I did it slowly, I did it with purpose, and I did it every time I needed a moment in the antiquarian world.

When I first told Vic Zoschak of Tavistock Books about my plan to write a review for the Book Club of California, his first question was “What’s the book?” His response to my answer just about sums up this little gem: “Ah, of course. Particularly enjoy pp. 95–98.” I have spent almost three years working alongside Vic, either in person or in handling Tavistock Book’s social media and blog. How, then, was I unaware that my employer and friend was the highlight of his very own chapter in a published work? (This is a rhetorical question — I don’t expect any of you to

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come up with an answer to something I cannot seem to answer myself). But there it is — one of the most endearing aspects of Barry's book are the subjects of her chapters, many of whom I know personally through my work in the antiquarian book trade. And I had no idea that some of them got their start in the book world by finding a copy of *Alice in Wonderland* at a garage sale for \$1 (Sunday & Josh of B&B Rare Books), or that another paid for her first couch with a finder's fee on a Sendak set (A BAA executive director Susan Benne), or even that one has had a "Nuremberg Chronicle" walk in off the street in Sandy, Utah (Ken Sanders of Ken Sanders Rare Books). The fact is, Barry's book really hit home for me, as many of her anecdotes were about people I know and places I have visited (though unfortunately, not situations I have been in...yet).

An aspect of Barry's book that all — even those removed from the book world, but of a curious nature — can stare at in wonder is her publication of facts usually withheld from the public. Barry did not seem to bat an eyelash (and I suppose neither did her interviewees) at publishing the (occasionally substantial) difference between a buying price and a selling price on an item highlighted within her pages. Booksellers can be notoriously tight-lipped on the subject (after all, if the price is an extreme jump it can look to outsiders like a scam, if the price is too low then perhaps it looks as though the bookseller purchased poorly) — but here in *Rare Books Uncovered* it is stated as openly as the name of the bookseller who sold it. That, in my opinion, is one of the most interesting aspects of Barry's work. The complete openness within — the particulars of who, what, where, when, and how (after all, we know the why) — makes the reader feel as though she is part of a great secret.

The short stories in *Rare Books Uncovered: True Stories of Fantastic Finds in Unlikely Places* run the gamut of the antiquarian book world. No matter what your interest is, there are bound to be a few stories coinciding with items in your wish list. There are chapters ranging in topic from Hypermodern Firsts found at Goodwill for 49 cents and sold online for \$30, to a watercolor folio of a seventeenth-century château in France found in a barn and sold to Columbia University in 1986 for \$75,000. This significant range in genre and subject allows for appeal to a broad scope of customers and clients. Those at all interested in the antiquarian book world can find a story that interests them (that is, if they are picky and not interested in all the stories, like they ought to be).

Inserted into the book to accompany the occasionally unbelievable stories are a handful of color photographs of some of the items in question. Though they are gathered toward the end of the book and it may have been more interesting to see an image for each story side-by-side with its textual counterpart, it would not seem feasible to do so for fifty-two chapters of just three to ten pages each. In any case, the images are a welcome visual to accompany such fantastic tales.

I thoroughly enjoyed Barry's book, even taking me as long as it did to read it. It kept me enveloped in the book world every day for a month — a lovely treat! I do believe Nicholas Basbanes hit the nail on the head in his forward for the text: "The exhilaration collectors feel when they make a great discovery is by no means unique to books, but there is an element to this particular form of determined

pursuit that is distinctive unto itself, one best expressed...by the noted bibliophile and literary critic Michael Sadleir...‘In nature, the bird who gets up earliest catches the most worms, but in book-collecting the prizes fall to birds who know worms when they see them.’” Barry has given the public a fantastic collection of stories, each interesting in its own way.

MARGUERITTE PETERSON works as an independent consultant with several antiquarian booksellers across the states, developing catalogues and managing social media platforms.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

HENRY L. SNYDER

As many of you have already learned, BCC librarian HENRY SNYDER passed away on February 29, 2016. What follows is his last article for the QN-L, written shortly before his death. (Henry was productive and passionate about his work to the very end!) But his numerous contributions to the Book Club of California in particular, and to the humanities in general, will live on in our memories and in special collections and libraries throughout the world. (For Henry's full obituary, please see below.)

THE BIG NEWS THIS ISSUE IS THAT WE HAVE COMPLETED CATALOGING ALL the Grabhorn Press ephemera. When we acquired the marvelous Grabhorn Press Collection of Florence Walter it was not limited just to the books printed by the Grabhorns, though that was the center of the collection. There was also a substantial quantity of ephemera. Every press at the time, whether fine press or job printing, turned out large quantities of ephemera — broadsides, postcards, advertisements, announcements, and pamphlets. This was the bread and butter of the trade. The Grabhorn Press was no exception. Indeed, the order that kickstarted the business when they moved to San Francisco in 1920 was for tens of thousands of mailings supporting a targeted campaign. The Book Club of California, an early sponsor of Grabhorn work, put out postcards announcing exhibitions, lists of books for sale, the constitution and regulations of the Club, and lists of officers. When the Roxburghe Club was founded in 1928 it too employed the Grabhorns along with other printers to publish announcements of meetings and keepsakes. The Grabhorns did a brisk business in Christmas cards, some designed for specific customers, some that became stock cards. These pieces of ephemera are elusive and hard to assemble. By their very nature they were controlled by the customers, and their distribution was limited and varied from order to order. Prior to acquiring the Walter collection, the Book Club already had a fair amount of Grabhorn ephemera, some from the collection of long-time member Dr. George Lyman. Florence mounted many of her Grabhorn items in two elephant folio albums. Some pieces were pasted in, some laid in, some mounted with scotch tape! We removed all we could and then took the albums to a paper conservator to remove

the rest. In all, we have cataloged 619 unique items plus several dozen more related to the Grabhorns, including the publications of Jane Grabhorn and items about the Grabhorns issued by other printers. All of have been entered into the global library cooperative OCLC. As many as one half of the records we added were new to OCLC's giant online catalog, WorldCat. Now that we have an accurate record of what the Book Club of California owns, we are looking for other Grabhorn ephemera to fill in the gaps. All donations will be gratefully received!

This past quarter has been rewarding in terms of gifts to the collection:

James Sperisen continues to donate items from the library of his late uncle, our founding librarian Albert Sperisen.

In the last issue we wrote about the Sharp Teeth Press, subsequently named The Prototype Press when it moved from San Francisco to Oakland, and its youthful founders, Mark Sarigianis and the late David Joseph Johnston. We had been introduced to them by our loyal member and valued volunteer Norman McKnight, and purchased most of the modest list of titles. Now Norman has once again enriched our library by giving us two additional titles from The Prototype Press.

Bob Chandler found and donated two billheads from DN & E Walter Company, the firm belonging to the family of Florence Walter's husband, John, who headed the company for some years.

Chris Loker and John Windle have given us a unique early Grabhorn publication, dating from the Indianapolis days of the firm. What makes it especially treasurable is its inscription from Edwin Grabhorn to Valenti Angelo, the Grabhorns' one-time illustrator. Chris and John also gave us a very early (1914) photograph of a book exhibition sponsored by the Book Club.

Early last month I was invited by Peter Stansky to look over his collection of English fine press books and select some for the BCC collection. I did so, sorting out small stacks of books. Peter said he would give first refusal to Stanford. Much to my surprise and pleasure, Peter delivered a generous portion of these to the Book Club of California in January. They are mostly English, post World War II imprints, of which we have few examples, so they are especially welcome. Thank you to Peter and all of our donors for enriching our collection and its value for members and students of the book arts.

IN MEMORIAM

HENRY L. SNYDER (1929–2016)

By David Snyder

HENRY L. SNYDER WAS BORN NOVEMBER 3, 1929, IN HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA. He earned BA, MA, and PhD degrees at the University of California, Berkeley. From 1951 to 1961 he served as an officer in the California Army National Guard, commanding companies in Walnut Creek and Pittsburg. Henry retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Reserves in 1978. Henry began teaching in 1963, and was a professor at the University of Kansas until 1979, then at Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge from 1979–1986. In 1986 he became Dean of Arts and Humanities

at University of California, Riverside, where he served as director of the Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research until his retirement at the end of 2009. Henry founded the California Newspaper Project to digitize those fragile, and often unique, runs of newspapers. He was a co-director and the leader of the American English Short Title Catalogue team for more than thirty-two years. In 2000 he inaugurated CCILA, Catálogo Colectivo de Impresos Latinoamericanos hasta 1851. He developed the prototype for the Hand Press Book File of the Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL) and was one of the organizers of CERL.

Dr. Snyder received one of the 2007 National Humanities Medals. His award cited him “for visionary leadership in bridging the worlds of scholarship and technology. His direction of massive projects in the digital humanities has opened new frontiers in cataloguing and preserving ideas and documents for future generations.” In 2009 he was appointed an honorary officer (O.B.E.) of The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for “services to English Studies worldwide” Dr. Snyder was a past president of the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies. He was also the founding president of the Baton Rouge Opera and served as the president of the Riverside (California) Opera. He served on the Board of Directors of the California Genealogical Society, and was a member of the Board of Directors of the Book Club of California, where he served as the Club’s librarian from 2013 until his death on February 29, 2016. Henry is survived by his three sons and seven grandchildren. A memorial service will be held on May 14 at 2 p.m. at First Congregational Church in Berkeley, CA.

DAVID SNYDER is the owner of Corporate Recruiters International, an executive search firm. He is also the custodian of his father’s extensive research into his family’s genealogical history.

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IN MEMORIAM

SANDOR G. BURSTEIN, MD (1924–2015)

By Mark Burstein

THE BOOK WORLD LOST ONE OF ITS BRIGHTEST LIGHTS ON NOVEMBER 21 OF LAST year. Born in Salt Lake City to Rabbi Elliot and Lottie Burstein, Sandor came to San Francisco as a young child, attending Grant Elementary, Lowell High School, the University of California at Berkeley (where he met Esther Moellenhoff [now English], the mother of his two children), and Stanford Medical School. His medical practice in San Francisco, in partnership with Dr. Arthur Cerf and based at Mt. Zion Hospital, was noted for the care and compassion he showed towards his patients, and his diagnostic skills.

Sandor was predeceased by his sisters, Devra Kettner and author/columnist Merla Zellerbach, and is survived by his “beloved bride” of fifty years, Elizabeth; two children (Jan Burstein of New York City and myself); two stepchildren; seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

He had a wide variety of interests beside medicine, incorporating glorious travels all over the globe; chamber and symphonic music, particularly J. S. Bach (he served as physician to the San Francisco Symphony during two of its world tours); and literature, as he read widely and deeply, his nightstand always holding a stack of books in progress.

Bibliophilia was a favored and prominent aspect of his personality. A longtime member of both the Book Club of California and the Roxburghe Club, he was particularly noted for his stunning collection of Lewis Carroll, which began with a single volume he found on a trip to Portugal in 1974 and bought to memorialize his trip and which has since grown to over 3,600 volumes (and innumerable tchotchkes) that he gifted to me years ago, and which I actively curate. He served as president of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America from 1983 to 1984, and co-founded its West Coast Chapter. Last year an exhibition of some of the gems of our collection was on display here at the BCC in tribute to the sesquicentennial of the publication of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.



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He also collected his favorite authors, Vladimir Nabokov and Mark Twain, as well as Ernest Bramah (particularly those featuring the storyteller Kai Lung) and Dan DeQuille; Judaica; art books (prominently Fabergé and Hieronymus Bosch); books produced by Paul Elder and Co.; books by or about his childhood heroes, explorers Alexander Humboldt and John Lloyd Stephens; and fine press editions, to mention but a few.

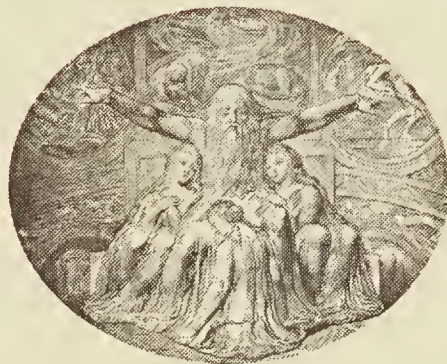
I fondly remember our excursions to various antiquarian book fairs over the last four decades, where he was particularly in his element, schmoozing with book dealers, fellow collectors, and his many bibliophilic friends. His extraordinary love for the written word and for books as art objects was passed down to my sister and me, who often quite independently find ourselves “discovering” the same writers, and our libraries overlap a great deal. It is particularly telling that his collecting interest centered on Lewis Carroll, whose wild sense of humor and the absurd was echoed in the word-besotted Sandor.

A quiet yet extraordinarily articulate man, he was known for his lightning wit, bon mots, astonishingly vast knowledge, and the twinkle in his eye. He touched so many lives: his extended family, his patients, his many correspondents, his bibliophilic friends, Carrollian comrades, fellow Frommies, and a host of others. He will be terribly missed.

MARK BURSTEIN has inherited his father’s abiding love of books, as well as now curating the Lewis Carroll Collection. He has served as president of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America, and written, edited, or contributed to fourteen books about Carroll. He served as Printers Devil at the Roxburghe Club, 2001–2003.

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QUARTERLY NEWS-LETTER

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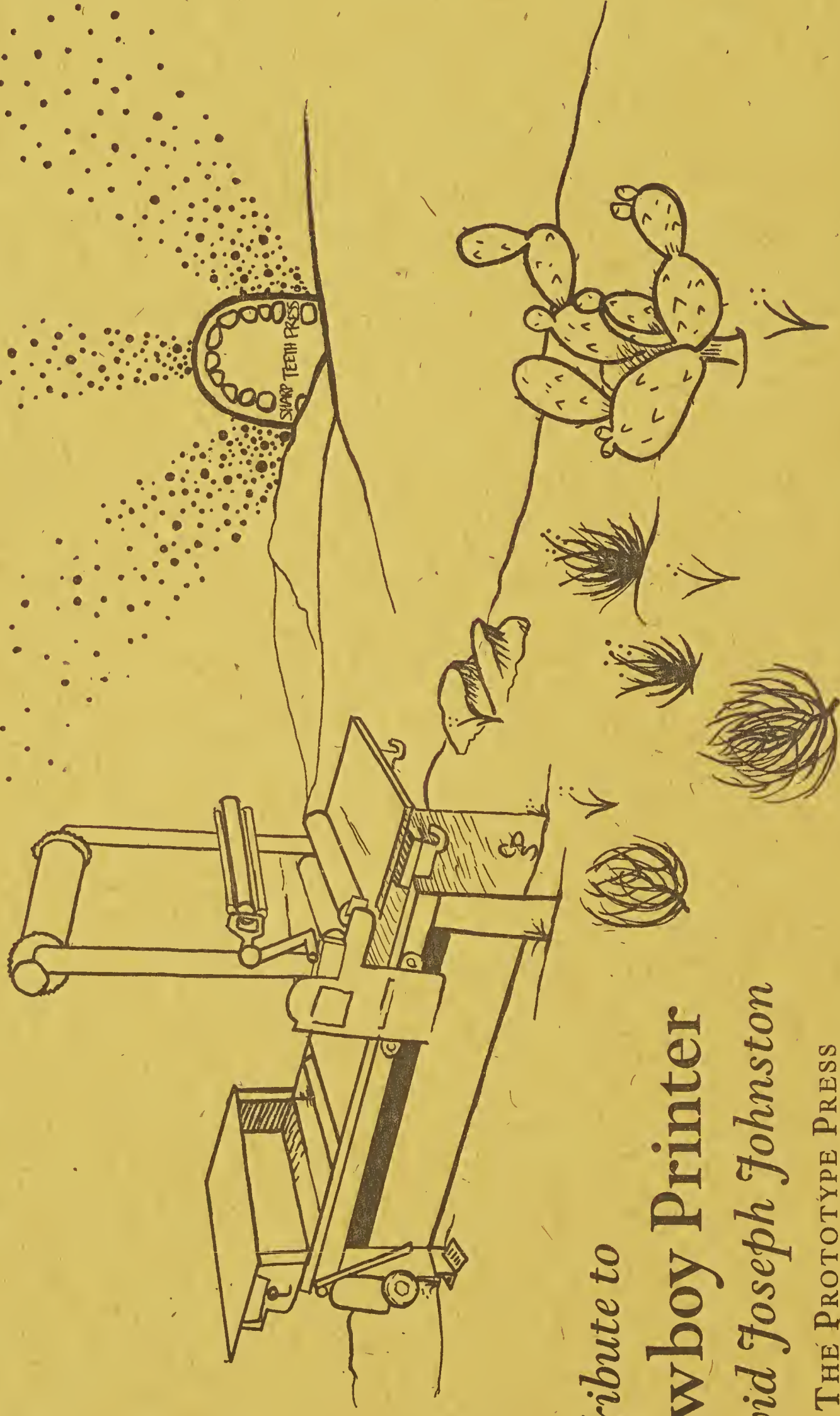
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OBERGEFELL ET AL. v. HODGES, DIRECTOR,
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